

Lesley-Anne Williams

Standing for the House of Laity of General Synod

Lesley Kneen, Weobley PCC and Kington and Weobley Deanery

Marcia Kaitilin Lynch-Staunton, Deanery Secretary Kington and Weobley Deanery



Hello, my name is Lesley-Anne, I am writing to ask you to vote for me in this important election for the General Synod. Being a member of General Synod is a significant commitment which I have prayerfully considered and those who know me well and previous members of General Synod have encouraged me to put my considerable experience and skills in service of God, the Diocese, and the national church. I have a reputation for professionalism and for getting things done, for listening and for building relationships and consensus. At this stage in my life, I am ready to commit my time, gifts and energy to this role to faithfully serve God, Jesus and the church community.

A lifelong Christian, I am married with 3 grown up children and 8 grandchildren and worship at St Peter and St Paul's Church in Weobley where I am a member of the PCC and the Kington and Weobley Deanery.

My Work and volunteering experience which has allowed me to express my faith in daily life and to show care and compassion for others includes :-

- Co- Chair of The Wilkinson Jay Response Group
- Chief Executive of Herefordshire and Worcestershire and Arden Primary Care Trusts
- Area Director NHS England (Arden Herefordshire and Worcestershire)
- Director of several Welfare to Work programmes, throughout the UK designed to support the disadvantaged and marginalised back to work
- Chief Executive of several medical charities
- Chief Executive of 2 hospices
- Cruse Bereavement Volunteer and supervisor for over 22 years
- Professional Certified Coach, Bereavement Counsellor and End of Life Coach
- ATALOSS The Bereavement Journey programme, now in its third year for Herefordshire on behalf of the Weobley and Staunton benefice

I am keen to learn where I can best contribute to General Synod and list here some of my personal interests:-

My governance and director experience

I have deep personal experience of supporting organisations where there have been failures of governance and have worked effectively to support their people to be the best that they can be. I understand the trauma that can result when things go wrong. Having worked with many different organisational forms, the public, private and third sectors, I am confident in working in complex and challenging environments and have insight into how the Church operates. As Co-Chair, I saw firsthand the workings of the Church and the decision-making processes, presenting to General

Synod, The House of Bishops and The Archbishops' Council and importantly engaging with victims and survivors.

An inclusive church for everyone, my desire for the flourishing of the whole church

My views are liberal and I believe that, as a Church we should be inclusive and encourage others to welcome everybody, regardless of their ethnicity, disability, sex, gender identity, neurodiversity, mental health or economic power. I currently support the marginalised in my counselling and coaching work and believe that the church too should be a welcoming place for all. I am Co-Chair of The UK International Coaches Federation Neuroinclusive Special Interest Group. My commitment to diversity is lived in my daily life; I am proud to have family members, clients, and close friends who identify with several communities that are often marginalised or excluded.

Safeguarding

My interest in safeguarding has run throughout my life and I have worked with victims and survivors on many occasions. Sadly, the Church has all too often been at the centre of deeply troubling safeguarding controversies. The scale of the institutional failures revealed is profoundly concerning. I have learnt too that change is slow in the church and there is much opposition and resistance to doing things differently. I am tenacious and determined in my approach and hugely resilient. I hope that my experience in this field will enable me to contribute to the future of safeguarding in the Anglican Church.

Mission, Growth and valuing volunteers

I want to see a living, faithful and growing church rooted in local communities able to serve God in their way. My personal concern extends to the health and wellbeing of both clergy and volunteers in the church, where I know that many are considering their futures. This leads me to actively want to support initiatives to sustain and develop those who are the backbone of our church community. Herefordshire is a rural diocese and the parish in which I live can feel far away from the policy and decision making at the centre of the church. I have spent a lifetime engaging others and translating policy into reality and would be keen to continue to do this.

Environment and Heritage

I am very interested to learn more about the Heritage of the Church and of its response to climate change and recognise the local financial burden parishes face when trying to go green. I would be keen to support plans to work towards Net Zero, recognising the challenges that this can create and to engage with local rural communities to support them in implementation of these plans.

This is a timely opportunity now for me and I commit to bringing a fresh outlook to General Synod, actively challenging preconceived ideas when necessary. To prove that we are a church for all people, we must acknowledge where change is required and have the courage to pursue it. Thank you for taking the time to read my address. I would be very grateful if you would consider giving me your first preference vote.

If you have any questions or would like to contact me to talk this through, then please get in touch at lesley@lesleyryder.co.uk or call me on 07720 448000.